



Public Affairs

**SPECIAL RECOGNITION AND AWARDS FOR AIR FORCE
PUBLIC AFFAIRS PEOPLE**

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This instruction provides guidance and procedures for nominating and submitting unit and individual awards. It describes the types of awards available, eligibility requirements, nomination procedures, submitting and processing nominations, and how the selection of winners is made. It includes sample nomination sheets. This instruction also outlines other Air Force and civilian public affairs awards for which PAOs should consider nominating units and individuals.

Paragraph

**SAF/PA AWARDS NOMINATION SHEET -- INDIVIDUAL AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING PUBLIC AFFAIRS
EXCELLENCE (BANDSMAN CATEGORIES)**

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

COVER SHEET

SAF/PA AWARDS NOMINATION SHEET -- EXCELLENCE AWARDS AND SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

SAF/PA AWARDS NOMINATION SHEET -- INDIVIDUAL AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

EXCELLENCE SAF/PA AWARDS NOMINATION SHEET -- INDIVIDUAL AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING PUBLIC
AFFAIRS EXCELLENCE (BANDSMAN CATEGORIES)

Section A —The Air Force Public Affairs Achievement Awards Program

1. Objective. This program is designed to recognize and encourage exceptional performance in both unit and individual categories.

2. Types of Awards:

2.1. The Air Force Public Affairs Director's Excellence Award is presented annually to a major command or equivalent, to a large wing or group equivalent (servicing a military population of 5,000 or more) and to a small wing or equivalent (servicing a military population of less than 5,000) (3 awards) judged to have conducted the best overall program in support of the public affairs mission. This is an award for the best public affairs operation over a calendar year period. (For example, a wing that has by far the best internal information, community relations, media relations, security review program, special events, planning, administration, etc., should receive recognition as the best public affairs organization in that category in the Air Force.) Only one winner will be selected in each category. A trophy is presented to the organization and certificates go to significant contributors.

2.2. The Air Force Public Affairs Director's Award for Special Achievement is presented annually to an office or organization for exceptional public affairs performance above and beyond the day-to-day activities of a public affairs operation. This award is given for special achievement for a planned single event, program or product. (For example, a command or base that has an exceedingly large or complicated open house or community event, or develops a unique internal information tool which is handled with outstanding public affairs skills.) Multiple awards may be presented. A trophy is presented to the organization and certificates go to significant individual contributors.

2.3. The Air Force Public Affairs Director's Award for Special Achievement in a Crisis Situation is presented annually to an office or organization for exceptional public affairs performance above and beyond the day-to-day activities of a public affairs

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operation. This award is given for special achievement in dealing with a crisis or unplanned event. (For example, a command or base has an air disaster, a humanitarian rescue effort, or supports a contingency operation such as Uphold Democracy or Deny Flight with outstanding public affairs skills.) Multiple awards may be presented. A trophy is presented to the organization and certificates go to significant contributors.

2.4. Individual Awards for Outstanding Public Affairs Excellence are presented annually for outstanding individual achievement. Individuals must have a broad experience base with an impeccable record. These awards are not designed for specialists, but well-rounded public affairs professionals. Only one winner will be selected in each category. Military and civilian winners of the Individual Awards for Public Affairs Excellence are eligible for the Air Force Recognition Ribbon. A plaque is presented to each recipient in the following categories:

- Outstanding Public Affairs Field Grade Officer.
- Outstanding Public Affairs Company Grade Officer.
- Outstanding Public Affairs Senior Grade Civilian (GS 12 to 15).
- Outstanding Public Affairs Intermediate Grade Civilian (GS 9 to 11).
- Outstanding Public Affairs Entry Level Civilian (GS 5 to 7).
- Outstanding Public Affairs Senior Noncommissioned Officer (E-7 to E-9).
- Outstanding Public Affairs Noncommissioned Officer (E-5 to E-6).
- Outstanding Public Affairs Airman (E-1 to E-4).
- Outstanding Reserve Component Public Affairs Officer (Company or Field Grade, Air Force Reserve or Air National Guard).
- Outstanding Reserve Component Public Affairs Enlisted Airman (E-1 to E-9, Air Force Reserve or Air National Guard).
- Outstanding Bandsman Senior Noncommissioned Officer (E-7 to E-9).
- Outstanding Bandsman Noncommissioned Officer (E-5 to E-6).
- Outstanding Bandsman Airman (E-1 to E-4).

3. Eligibility Requirements. Public affairs activities throughout the Air Force may be nominated for organizational or unit awards. Active duty Public Affairs officers and enlisted personnel, full-time Public Affairs Reservists (Air Reserve Technicians or full-time Air National Guard members) and Air Force Public Affairs civilian employees (to include host nation civilian employees and Public Affairs Career Program interns) who have contributed significantly to the effectiveness of Air Force public affairs may be nominated for individual awards. Part-time Category A Public Affairs Reservists and Individual Mobilization Augmentees may be nominated for Outstanding Reserve Component Public Affairs Officer or Outstanding Reserve

Component Public Affairs Enlisted Airman. Nominees in the individual award categories must hold a Public Affairs AFSC or civilian job series code. All nominees for bandsman categories must be assigned to an active-duty Air Force band.

4. Nomination Procedures. Nominations cover performance during the preceding calendar year. Only one copy of the cover sheet and narrative sheet are required. The nomination will not exceed two typed pages (8 1/2 by 11 inches). Page one (Attachment 1) is a cover sheet providing all the administrative information on the nominee and organization. Page two, narrative sheet (Attachments 2 - 4), is one typed page using the bullet format with 1-inch borders on the top and sides and 1/2-inch border at the bottom. The typeface must be at least 12-point. Do not submit supplementary material (i.e., clippings, videos, photos, etc.); they will not be seen by the judges. Narratives exceeding one page in length will not be judged.

5. Submitting and Processing Nominations. MAJCOMs, FOAs, DRUs, the ANG and the Air Force Reserve will submit only one nomination per category. All bands submit bandsman nominations through their MAJCOM/PA. Mail nominations to SAF/PAR, 1690 Air Force Pentagon, Washington DC 20330-1690, postmarked by 31 January. Organizations that do not report directly to a MAJCOM, FOA, the ANG or the Air Force Reserve should forward nominations directly to SAF/PAR. Narratives exceeding one page or not postmarked by 31 January will not be judged.

6. Selecting the Winners. A board chaired by the Mobilization Assistant to the Director of Public Affairs will evaluate the nominations and select the winners.

7. Judging Criteria:

7.1. The organizational and unit award nominations will be judged on the type and degree of research and planning that went into identifying issues and determining strategies and techniques to reach communication objectives; execution of the plan and how resources and personnel were used to reach objectives; and how the success of the program was evaluated.

7.2. The individual award nominations will be judged on outstanding individual achievement. Individuals nominated for the Public Affairs categories must hold a Public Affairs AFSC or civilian job series code and have an impeccable career record. Public Affairs award nominees will be judged on the application of public affairs job knowledge, leadership skills, professional qualities, organizational and planning skills, judgment and decisions, and communication skills. Bandsman awards nominees will be judged on application of job knowledge, leadership skills, professional qualities, organizational and planning skills, judgment and decisions, and musical accomplishments.

8. Announcement and Presentation of Awards. Awards will be announced by message immediately following selection. Awards will be presented during the Air Force Public Affairs Worldwide Conference. Winners in each category will be invited to the conference awards banquet. Travel/per diem costs for attendees are unit or MAJCOM funded.

Section B —Other Air Force Level Public Affairs Recognition and Awards

9. Public Affairs Company Grade Excellence (PACE)

Program. This is a leadership program that contributes to the career development of select company grade officers by providing a three-day visit to Washington DC to inform and motivate these future public affairs leaders. The annual visit is in the fall. The officer selected as the Public Affairs Achievement Awards' Outstanding Public Affairs Company Grade Officer plus nine others attend. SAF/PAR is the OPR.

9.1. Eligibility Requirement. Company grade officers not yet selected for major are eligible to be nominated.

9.2. Selection Procedures. The major commands are responsible for establishing their internal selection process. The MAJCOM selection is forwarded to SAF/PA upon request. Attendance quotas based on company grade populations are ACC - 2; AMC - 1; AETC - 1; USAFE - 1; PACAF - 1; AFMC - 1; AFSPC - 1; and 1 selected from AFSOC/DRU/FOA and SAF personnel. One-page, bullet format nominations from AFSOC/DRU/FOA/SAF are submitted to SAF/PAR citing the individual's accomplishments and how he or she would benefit from exposure to national-level public affairs operations. A panel of three SAF/PA O-6s will review the nominations and recommend to the director the officer to attend.

9.3. Announcement of PACE Participants. The participants are notified by message sent to their commanders and public affairs offices. Additionally, they are recognized in the Public Affairs Guidance Letter.

10. Arno Luehman Scholarship Award. This is a \$1,000 grant that must be used to further the recipient's advanced study in the field of public relations and communication. Recipient is selected from among the outstanding Air Force graduates from each of the classes in the AFIS Short Course in Communication. SAF/PAR is the OPR.

11. Air Force Public Affairs Alumni Association Award.

This award is sponsored annually and recognizes the officer, civilian or enlisted member who demonstrated professional excellence, and contributed significantly to the effectiveness of the Air Force Public Affairs mission. Selection is made from the winners of the Public Affairs Achievement Awards individual categories. The winner

receives the award at the Air Force Public Affairs Worldwide Conference awards banquet.

Section C —Public Affairs Awards for which AFNEWS is the OPR

12. Air Force Media Contest. The Air Force Media Contest is conducted each year to recognize the outstanding contributions by Air Force journalists and broadcasters in support of the internal information program and the Air Force mission.

12.1. Types of Awards. The contest is conducted in two divisions: print and broadcasting.

12.2. Eligibility Requirements. All Air Force public affairs offices, Air Force broadcasters assigned to operated Armed Forces Radio and Television Services, and detachments are eligible to enter.

12.3. Nomination Procedures. Nominations cover performance during the preceding calendar year. Entries must have been produced primarily for internal information purposes and published or broadcast during the contest year.

12.4. Submitting and Processing Nominations. For print entries MAJCOMs/FOAs/DRUs submit entries to AFNEWS/IIOP, which provides specific guidance for entries, categories, administrative submission requirements, and operating rules. All broadcast entries are submitted to HQ AFBS/XOO, who manages the broadcast portion of this contest for AFNEWS/IIOP. Contest rules are based on the interservice criteria of the Thomas Jefferson Awards Contest issued annually by the American Forces Information Service (OASD/PA). Selected finalists in the various categories are designated official Air Force entries in the DoD-sponsored Thomas Jefferson Awards Contest.

12.5. Judging Criteria. Judging is based on journalistic excellence, support of Air Force objectives, and use as a management tool by the commander (print division) or professional excellence, originality, use of facilities, and support of Air Force public affairs themes (broadcasting division).

12.6. Announcement and Presentation of Awards. Awards will be announced by SAF/PA. Journalist and Broadcaster of the Year awards will be presented during the Air Force Public Affairs Worldwide Conference. Winners will be invited to the conference awards banquet. Travel/per diem costs for attendees are unit or MAJCOM funded. Air Force awards are certificates (**AF Forms 3166, AF Broadcasting Award Certificate, and 3168, AF Newspaper Award Certificate**) and plaques presented to unit and/or individual winners in each category or class in the print and broadcasting division. First-, second- and third-place winners are selected in the print division. First-, second- and third-place awards are given in the broadcasting division. Individual military and civilian prime contributors designated first-place winners in each category and sub-category of the Air Force Media Contest are eligible for the Air Force Recognition Ribbon.

13. DoD Thomas Jefferson Awards. These awards recognize individual and unit print and broadcast activities for professional excellence and outstanding achievements in completing the internal information mission. Department of Air Force nominations for the awards are submitted based on results of the annual Air Force Media Contest. The program is administered by the American Forces Information Service. Armed forces newspapers and radio and television production facilities are eligible to enter.

Section D —Armed Forces Information Service/Armed Forces Radio and Television Service Awards

14. Colonel Tom Lewis Award for Outstanding Military Broadcasting. This is awarded annually in recognition of military broadcasters who have distinguished themselves while assigned to AFRTS. Military and civilians may be nominated for the award, named in honor of the first AFRTS commander. The winner is selected by a judging panel of professional civilian broadcasters. Demonstration of distinguished service or outstanding contributions or achievement is the only criterion for nomination. The award is presented at the annual AFRTS worldwide conference and workshop.

15. Military Photographer of the Year. This award recognizes outstanding photographers in the armed forces in various categories as stated annually by the AFIS staff. The contest is open to assigned military photographers and public affairs people. Contest rules and information are available at unit public affairs offices and photo labs.

Section E —Other Public Affairs Awards

16. Other Public Affairs Awards. Units are encouraged to compete for other Public Affairs awards. Units making submissions for any of the following awards should send them directly to the sponsoring organization.

16.1. The Gold Screen Award program is the National Association of Government Communicators' annual contest to recognize outstanding broadcasting and audiovisual products. The contest is open to writers, editors, designers, photographers, public affairs practitioners and other communicators who work for federal, state, county, municipal, and other government organizations in the association. Membership is not a criterion of eligibility. The 10 contest categories are: films and videotapes, TV programs or public service announcements, radio programs, radio public service announcements, slide-tape presentations, multi-image presentations, black and white photographs, color photographs, exhibits and displays, and art and illustrations. Traditionally, entries are due in March.

16.2. Blue Pencil Awards are sponsored each year by the National Association of Government Communicators. Numerous categories of published materials are open for writers, editors, designers, printing officers, public affairs people and other communicators who work for federal,

state, county, municipal and other government organizations in the association. Membership is not an award criterion. Categories include: folders and brochures, books, popular and technical publications, periodicals, newsletters, newspapers, feature stories, news releases, posters, and annual reports. Traditionally, entries are due in March.

16.3. Clarion Awards are sponsored by Women in Communications, Inc (WICI). The various categories are in the areas of print, public relations, broadcasting and advertising. Winners are honored for excellence in the use of communication. Membership is not a criterion of eligibility. According to WICI, "In medieval times, the clarion was a trumpet noted for clarity of tone. The WICI Clarion symbolizes the clear, concise communications that are recognized with the Clarion Awards." Traditionally, entries are due in February of each year.

16.4. Gold Quill Awards are sponsored each year by the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC). Entries are composed of two elements: a copy of the entry itself (i.e., feature or editorial, photograph, newspaper, audiovisual program) and a statement of objectives and results. The IABC believes the impact an entry had on its audience is as important as the entry itself. Membership is not a criterion for eligibility. Traditionally, entries are due in January.

16.5. Aviation/Space Writers Association (AWA) Public Information Award is presented each year to a PAO or civilian in recognition of outstanding and meritorious individual service in disseminating Air Force public information during the previous year. Nominations are submitted by AWA members to a selection committee each year.

16.6. Silver Anvil Award competition is conducted each year by the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) to give deserved recognition to outstanding public relations programs and to stimulate and encourage improved public relations performance and techniques. The symbolic Silver Anvil was selected because the validity, quality, and achievement of any public relations activity ultimately is measured on the anvil of public opinion. Any unit engaged in organized public relations activity during the calendar year is eligible to enter any outstanding public relations achievement for that period. Membership in PRSA is not a requirement and will not affect the judging of the presentation for awards. Each entry must be based on sound public relations aims, objectives and philosophies. Each must be thoroughly planned and meet the highest standards of production, execution, and performance. Awards are presented at the annual Silver Anvil Awards Banquet. Competition details are announced each year by PRSA.

Section F —Other Awards

17. Other Awards. The Air Force Association gives several annual awards of Air Force-wide interest relating to aerospace activity. (See AFI 36-2805)

17.1. Citations of Honor may be given to individuals or organizations for the most outstanding contribution to national defense significantly exceeding standard performance. Public affairs people and organizations may be nominated for this award.

17.2. The Gill Robb Wilson Award is given to an individual or organization for the most outstanding contribution to national defense in the field of arts and letters covering a wide range of activity including writing, speaking and media relations by either a military member or Department of the Air Force civilian, unit or group of individuals.

18. Ten Outstanding Young Americans Award. The Ten Outstanding Young Americans Award is sponsored each year by the United States Jaycees. Recipients are chosen for exceptional achievements that have been significant to their profession, communities, states or the nation. (See AFI 36-2805)

19. Forms Prescribed. This instruction prescribes the following forms: AF Form 3166, **AF Broadcasting Award Certificate**; and AF Form 3168, **AF Newspaper Award Certificate**.

RONALD T. SCONYERS, Brig General, USAF
Director of Public Affairs

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACC–Air Combat Command

AETC–Air Education and Training Command

AFMC–Air Force Materiel Command

AFNEWS/HOP–Headquarters Air Force News Agency, Print News Team

AFRTS–American Forces Radio and Television Service

AFSC–Air Force Specialty Code

AFSOC–Air Force Special Operations Commands

AMC–Air Mobility Command

ANG–Air National Guard

DoD–Department of Defense

DRUs–Direct Reporting Units

FOAs–Field Operating Agencies

HQ AFBS/XOO –Headquarters Air Force Broadcasting Service, Operations Division

Large Wing or Group Equivalent–a unit servicing a military population of 5,000 or more

MAJCOMs–Major Commands

OASD/PA –Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs

PACAF–Pacific Air Forces

PACE–Public Affairs Company Grade Excellence Program

SAF/PAR –Secretary of the Air Force Office of Public Affairs, Resources Division

Small Wing or Equivalent–a unit servicing a military population of less than 5,000

USAFE–United States Air Forces in Europe

COVER SHEET

AWARD CATEGORY:

YEAR OF AWARD:

ORGANIZATION:

SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTORS: (Full Names with Grades)

COMMAND:

MESSAGE ADDRESS:

MAILING ADDRESS:

MAJCOM COMMANDER'S NAME, MAILING ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER:

UNIT COMMANDER'S NAME, MAILING ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER:

POINT OF CONTACT: Attach the single page nomination narrative to this cover sheet. Mail nominations to SAF/PAR, 1690 Air Force Pentagon, Washington, DC 20330-1690 postmarked no later than 31 January

SAF/PA AWARDS NOMINATION SHEET -- EXCELLENCE AWARDS AND SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS**YEAR:****AWARDS CATEGORY:****ORGANIZATION:****General Description:****Research and Planning:****Execution:****Evaluation:**

**SAF/PA AWARDS NOMINATION SHEET -- INDIVIDUAL AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING PUBLIC AFFAIRS
EXCELLENCE**

YEAR:

NOMINEE'S NAMES:

AWARD CATEGORY:

ORGANIZATION:

Job Knowledge/Professional Qualities:

Leadership/Organizational Planning Skills:

Judgment/Decisions:

Communication Skills:

**SAF/PA AWARDS NOMINATION SHEET -- INDIVIDUAL AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING PUBLIC AFFAIRS
EXCELLENCE (BANDSMAN CATEGORIES)**

YEAR:

NOMINEE'S NAME:

AWARD CATEGORY:

ORGANIZATION:

Job Knowledge/Professional Qualities:

Leadership/Organizational Planning Skills:

Judgment/Decisions:

Musical Accomplishments: